

WASHINGTON STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

WSTC POLICY STATEMENT: ***NAMING OR RENAMING STATE TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES***

Section 1

Statutory Authority:

RCW 47.01, Chapter 33, Laws of 2007

Section 2

What is the purpose of naming or renaming state transportation facilities?

The Commission has named state transportation facilities after an individual, a group of individuals, entities, etc. for many years at the request of the Legislature and communities. A naming is done in a thorough and deliberative manner to honor and institute an enduring memory of a person or group of people who have contributed significantly to the well-being of the state or nation and with the widespread support of the people from the area in which the facility is located. The Commission shall avoid acting to name or rename a facility in response to emotion or duress.

Section 3

Definitions

“Commission” means the Washington State Transportation Commission.

“Department” means the Washington State Department of Transportation.

“Facility” includes, but is not limited to:

1. state highways;
2. state highway bridges, structures, and facilities;
3. ferry terminals;
4. state rest areas; and
5. state roadside facilities, such as viewpoints.

Section 4

What types of state transportation facilities may be named or renamed by the Transportation Commission?

The Commission may name facilities owned or operated by the State of Washington.

Section 5

Who can initiate the process to name or rename a facility?

The Legislature, the Washington State Department of Transportation, state and local governmental entities, citizen organizations, and any person may initiate the process to name or rename a facility.

Section 6

What is the process for initiating the naming of a state transportation facility?

To initiate the naming process without a legislative Joint Memorial being enacted, an interested party must contact the Commission to establish their interest in seeking a naming. The requesting party shall provide sufficient evidence to the Commission indicating community support and acceptance of the proposal.

Evidence of community support and acceptance may include things such as:

1. Letters of support from state and federal legislators representing area of the facility;
2. Resolutions passed by local, publicly elected bodies in the area of the facility;
3. Department support;
4. Supportive action by or letters from local organizations such as local chambers of commerce or service clubs.

After receiving adequate evidence of support, the Commission shall consult with the department on the proposal to name or rename a facility and schedule the proposal for discussion and possible action at a regular meeting of the Commission.

Should the Legislature pass a Joint Memorial requesting the Commission name a facility, the Commission will hold a public hearing to allow for public input prior to taking action as soon as possible following the enactment of the joint memorial.

Section 7

What criteria are used by the Commission when it is requested to name a facility after an individual?

If a naming request is submitted for a person who has recently died, the Commission shall not act on the request for at least twelve months after the date of passing to allow for a respectful period of mourning and reflection.

If two or more names are submitted for the same facility, the Commission shall consider the possibility of naming the facility using both names, and shall seek additional input into its decision, such as but not limited to, through consultation with community leaders or through a public hearing in the vicinity of the facility.

The Commission shall exercise extra caution in naming or renaming a facility in honor of a living person, giving extra consideration to the appropriateness of the timing of the naming in the context of the individual's life and current standing in the community.

In considering whether to name a facility after an individual or a group of people, the Commission shall evaluate such things as:

- Whether the person or group made a significant contribution to transportation in such areas as safety, mobility of people and goods, economic vitality and protection of the environment.
- Whether the person or group committed a significant amount of their time working on or addressing transportation or other significant issues in the state.

- Whether the person or groups efforts has had a positive long-term effect on the lives of the people that they represented.

Section 8

What is the process the Commission uses to rename a state transportation facility that already has a name assigned to it?

The Commission may rename a state facility already given a name, if petitioned to do so. In addition to the process described in section 6 for naming a facility, the Commission shall, at a minimum, consult with the descendants of the person originally honored, and seek public comment and input in the vicinity of the facility.

Section 9

What happens after a facility is named or renamed by the Commission?

After the Commission takes final action, it shall notify the Department, the Governor's Office, and the legislators and elected local legislative officials from the area in which the facility is located. The department shall design and install the appropriate signs in accordance with state and federal standards.

If the facility is a bridge, the Regional Administrator shall provide a description of the bridge and its location to the State Bridge and Structures Preservation Engineer.

The Commission shall maintain a single record of all facilities named, for the purpose of easy access by the public and the legislature.